

This is the guy you all want to make friends with if you are planning on dying ever.

He raises the dead for a living". These are the words of a student presenting this remarkable man to the audience of one of the numerous lectures of resuscitation.

Lance B. Becker, MD, is a Professor of Emergency Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania at the Center for Resuscitation Science. He is board certified in internal medicine, emergency medicine and critical care medicine.



Dr. Becker has received numerous awards and recognition for his work and leadership. He has served on the National American Heart Association's Basic Life Support Committee and Advanced Life Support subcommittees.

He has been a past Chair of the Cardiopulmonary, Perioperative, and Critical Care Council of the American Heart Association and is a past Chairman of the Basic Life Support Committee. He has served as representative to ILCOR and helped create and continues to co-direct the Resuscitation Science Symposium of the American Heart Association, one of the leading international venues for the presentation of cutting edge science in resuscitation.

The rules of the old game, accepted as fact that when it came to cardiac arrest, the survival rate for patients whose hearts suddenly stopped pumping was 18 percent. But that's not what Becker was seeing while working in the ER at Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago in the 1980s. Way more cardiac-arrest patients were dying. So many, in fact, that he decided to study the numbers officially. He found that the percentage of survivors in Chicago wasn't 18. It was only 1.8.

These findings jump-started Becker's career, landing him his first publication in the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine in 1993.

Dr. Becker's research interests today are very translational and extend across the basic science laboratory into animal models of resuscitation, and to human therapies. His cellular studies have helped define cellular reperfusion injury mechanisms, mitochondrial oxidant generation, reactive oxygen and nitrogen species responses to ischemia, apoptotic activation following ischemia, signaling pathways, new cellular cytoprotective strategies, and hypothermia protection. Additional studies are ongoing on development of novel human coolants for rapid induction of hypothermia, inflammatory pathways activated following shock and cardiac arrest, improving the quality of CPR, new defibrillator and cardiopulmonary bypass technologies, epidemiology of sudden death, and novel treatments for cardiac arrest.

What keeps him going? "I get to talk to people who were dead," Becker says.

Professor Becker has truly dedicated his life to research and training that will save lives from sudden death.

The slogan of PENN Center for Resuscitation Science. Since in his mind mostly dead is slightly alive.

*Citation by Maaret Castrén*